

Final
Finding of No Significant Impact for the
Implementation of Base Realignment and Closure 2005
Realignment Actions at El Dorado, Arkansas

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (Title 40 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* [CFR] Parts 1500–1508) for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (Title 42 of the United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 *et seq.*) and 32 CFR Part 651 (*Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*), the U.S. Army Reserve conducted an environmental assessment (EA) of the potential environmental and socioeconomic effects associated with implementing the proposal to construct and operate an Armed Forces Reserve Center (AFRC) at El Dorado, Arkansas, according to the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC Commission) recommendations.

Proposed Action

The Army proposes to close the U.S. Army Reserve Center, El Dorado, Arkansas, and relocate units to a new AFRC in El Dorado, Arkansas, if the Army is able to acquire suitable land for the construction of the facilities. The new AFRC would have the capability to accommodate Arkansas National Guard Units from the Arkansas Army National Guard Readiness Center, El Dorado, if the state decides to relocate those National Guard units. To meet the BRAC Commission's directive, the Army proposes to acquire approximately 9 acres in El Dorado. After acquiring the property, the Army would construct an AFRC having approximately 61,100 square feet of space. The primary facilities of the new AFRC would consist of a training building, Organization Maintenance Shop, an unheated storage building, and parking for military and personal vehicles. The facilities would be adequate to accommodate 200 personnel. The buildings would be of permanent construction. Because the property proposed to be acquired is undeveloped, no demolition of existing facilities would be required. Construction could begin as early as March 2010 and could be completed by March 2011.

The site proposed for the new AFRC is known as Site 8 in the Army's Site Survey Report (November 3, 2008). It is in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of North West Avenue and Highway 167B on the north side of El Dorado.

The El Dorado AFRC would support the operations of units of the Army Reserve and the Arkansas Army National Guard. The AFRC would be used Monday through Friday by a small, full-time staff and on weekends for training by the various Reserve Component units. Approximately 200 Reservists and Guardsmen would be assigned to the units stationed at the AFRC. Daily operations would include administrative, training, and maintenance support of unit missions and requirements; recruiting; and preparation for battle assembly weekends.

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide the facilities needed to support the BRAC Commission's recommendation pertaining to U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard units located in El Dorado. The proposed action is needed to improve the nation's ability to respond rapidly to challenges of the 21st century. The proposed action also is needed because existing Army Reserve and Army National Guard facilities are substandard and inadequately sized to support the number of assigned Soldiers.

Alternatives Considered

Alternatives to the proposed action were assessed on the basis of alternative sites. The Army assembled a Site Survey Team to prepare an *Available Site Identification and Validation Report* evaluating eight potential sites for the AFRC. Three sites that did not meet all of the selection criteria were eliminated from further consideration. Based on detailed examinations that included site visits, three of the five remaining sites were eliminated from further consideration because they do not meet some of or all of the following criteria: net usable acreage; compatibility with surrounding land uses; support for intended construction and environmental compliance; ready access to public utilities; reasonable cut or fill requirements; proximity to a major roadway corridor and safe ingress and egress; reasonable purchase price, within budget; or appropriate zoning and antiterrorism (property set-back requirements) considerations. The EA evaluates implementation of the proposed action (the Preferred Alternative) on Site 8 and implementation of the Site 7 Alternative. As prescribed by the CEQ Regulations, the EA also evaluates the No Action Alternative, under which the units proposed for relocation would continue to operate from their current facilities.

Factors Considered in Determining That No Environmental Impact Statement is Required

The EA, which is attached hereto and incorporated by reference into this finding of no significant impact (FNSI), examines the potential effects of the proposed action and the No Action Alternative on resource areas and areas of environmental and socioeconomic concern: land use, aesthetics and visual resources, air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomics (including environmental justice and protection of children), transportation, utilities, and hazardous and toxic materials.

No adverse effects from implementing the proposed action would be expected on the following resource areas: land use; geology, topography, and prime farmland soils; water resources (including floodplains and the coastal zone); sensitive species; wetlands; cultural resources; population, housing, quality of life, environmental justice, and the protection of children; and utilities. *Short-term minor adverse* effects from implementing the proposed action would be expected on the following resource areas: aesthetic and visual resources, the noise environment, soils, and transportation. *Short-term minor beneficial* effects from implementing the proposed action would be expected on economic development. *Long-term minor adverse* effects from implementing the proposed action would be expected on aesthetic and visual resources, the noise environment, air quality, vegetation, wildlife, transportation, and hazardous and toxic substances. None of the adverse effects associated with implementing the proposed action would be significant.

The effects of implementing the Site 7 Alternative would, for all practical purposes, be identical to the effects of implementing the Preferred Alternative. Site 7 is approximately 250 feet east of the preferred site; is also vacant, forested land; and is in most other ways very similar to the preferred site.

No adverse effects on any resource area would be expected from implementing the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, the Army would not construct an AFRC.

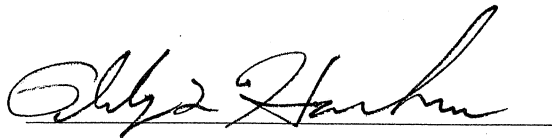
Public Review

The EA and draft FNSI were available for review and comment for 30 days from publication of a Notice of Availability in the *El Dorado News-Times* on March 27, 2009. Copies of the final EA and draft FNSI were available from Sam Pett at Tetra Tech, Inc., and a copy of the EA and draft FNSI was available in El Dorado at the Barton Library, 200 E. 5th Street. The EA and draft FNSI could also be read on the Internet at http://www.hqda.army.mil/acsim/brac/env_ea_review.htm. No comments on the EA and draft FNSI were submitted during the review period. Agency responses to coordination letters regarding

undertaking the proposed action, included in Appendix C of the EA, indicated no concerns with respect to cultural resources, threatened and endangered species, or fish and wildlife resources.

Conclusions

On the basis of the EA, which is herewith incorporated, it has been determined that implementation of the proposed action would have no significant effects on the quality of human life or the natural environment. Preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required before implementing the proposed action.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Philip L. Hanrahan", written over a horizontal line.

Philip L. Hanrahan, Brigadier General
U.S. Army Reserve, Commanding

A handwritten date "15 May 2009" written in dark ink over a horizontal line.

Date Signed